

STATINTL

Several weeks ago Colonel Gibbs handed me your letter to him of 7 January to which this is a most belated reply. I have been meaning to write you for sometime but the press of work seems to have been particularly heavy here in the last several weeks. At long last I am, however, taking advantage of Mr. Cunningham's and [] trip to send this long over-due note to you.

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We have not been able as I am well aware to meet all of your requests for particular individuals but I hope we have done reasonably well by you. Your excellent opinion of John Parangosky agrees with and confirms my own. I was confident that he would turn out to be a source of real strength to you and I am very happy indeed that it has worked out in this way. As I told you before you left to assume your present duties, I feel that John is one of the very ablest people that our organization has contributed to this project.

I am less aware from this distance of any supply problems you have and of the progress you are undoubtedly making in improving your supply situation generally. If we can give you any help from this Headquarters, please be sure to let us know.

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Looking to the near future all of us here are excited by the prospect of rather extensive operations. I have to warn you that the major decision to carry these out is being made only slowly and probably on a piecemeal basis. Much of my own time and energy still has to be devoted to the review of the issues involved in these decisions with the very senior officials who are concerned with them. I remain hopeful, however, that we will be allowed to carry out at least a considerable part of our program.

In this connection I cannot overstress the importance of the most painstaking maintenance of equipment, especially airframes and engines. I am sure you realize that it will take only one failure in an actual operation to put us out of business and deprive the country of a desperately needed capability. I say this not out of any fear that you will have forgotten it but to suggest that, with the commencement of operations, you re-emphasize to all of your personnel the absolutely crucial importance of maintaining the highest and most exacting standards of maintenance. In the same spirit I would emphasize to the drivers that any evidence of malfunction should be the occasion of aborting a mission. Safety must be a primary objective.

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To turn to a much less important matter, I will probably make a trip to Europe sometime in the first half of March. This will probably be necessary to enable me to carry through certain negotiations [redacted] about which Jim Cunningham will tell you but I will expect to spend at least a day or so in Wiesbaden and I might pay you a visit. I would certainly not like to let the occasion go by without meeting with you either at Wiesbaden or at your own base and I am reluctant to suggest that you make another trip to Wiesbaden at a time when you will be very busy with preparations for an active season. If you believe that a trip to Wiesbaden would be profitable to you on other grounds, let me know. Otherwise, I will take the time to visit your base. The date would probably be about 10 March, that is just a few days before you will probably be sending an advance party into your staging base if our present schedule holds up.

It will be a pleasure to see you at that time. I hope our political support continues firm here. In the meanwhile my warmest regards.

Very sincerely yours,

WMB:djm

O-Handcarried by J. Cunningham

1-Pro. Dir Chrono

(Seen by Col. Gibbs 4/4/58)



7 January 1958

Dear Colonel Gibbs,

First, I hope that your illness is of very short duration and the New Year will bring you the things you desire. I know your deep concern for this work has not been the best thing for your health although this dedication has been a primary factor in the success of the mission.

I have refrained from writing you in view of your proposed trip so will give you a brief run down on how things are stacking up. The personnel assignments are all satisfactory with Mr. Parangosky in the outstanding category. Of course the personnel I brought with me have been of great assistance in getting the procedures and desires of the new C.O. into practice. A let down in the standardization of good operating procedures was noticeable and I believe this was natural in view of the departure of [] and the complete change of staff personnel.

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My request for specific groups and for individuals was prompted by the personnel's personal request to remain here and second by my observation of their capabilities. However, since this was impracticable in some cases, will get the job done with the personnel projected. A request was made when the information available did not indicate this was contrary to the best interest of the project.

The two biggest problems here originally were supply and air transportation. The supply situation is being fully looked into by [] and myself. We find many improvements can be made in our own and local base procedures and we are working this out with the personnel concerned. I hope this will be tied down in the next 30 - 40 days.

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The establishment of a definite C-54 schedule has relieved many problems and seems to be taking care of the R&R problem very satisfactorily. The input of the C-118 will be gravy and the pressurization and speed will help in the case of dependents and children.

I have no other major issues. I have tried to indoctrinate the staff to eliminate minor traffic to headquarters and just request assistance after we have fully investigated the feasibility of working it out ourselves. In turn I would appreciate your assistance in asking headquarters personnel to refrain from getting into the act on info messages. This third party at times leads to great confusion and a rupture of relations with the party concerned.

My forecast for a smooth running team here is 1 February. By that time the maintenance, equipment and operating procedures should be well established.

Again my best to you and also my regards to your wife. I'm still indebted to you for the wonderful golf date in Washington. Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,

[]
S. W. BEERLI

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